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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 2924
INFO RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE
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RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHINGTON DC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 003235

SIPDIS

STATE PASS TO AF/FO AND AF/RSA FOR WHALDEMAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/25/2018

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [MARR](#) [AU](#)

SUBJECT: USAU: AFRICOM COMMANDER MEETS WITH AU HEAD KIKWETE

Classified By: Ambassador John A. Simon, reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (SBU) Summary: In a wide-ranging discussion with AFRICOM Commander General William E. &Kip8 Ward, Tanzanian President and African Union Assembly Chair Jakaya Kikwete discussed the Africa Union,s Peace and Security Architecture, Sudan, the Eastern Congo, Somalia, piracy, and the perception of AFRICOM in Africa. President Kikwete thanked the United States for its training assistance through the Africa Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program and committed to making progress on a Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA). End Summary.

¶2. (C) General Ward began the discussion by congratulating President Kikwete on his tenure as Chair of the African Union Assembly, and the President responded by saying &sympathies would be more appropriate.8 He noted that the past year had been &just terrible,8 with a crisis in Kenya occurring as soon as he took office and crises continuing through the latest eruption in Eastern Congo. &There are so many surprises in Africa,8 mused the President.

AFRICOM ISSUES OF THE PAST

¶3. (SBU) President Kikwete inquired about AFRICOM,s progress. He noted there had been misperceptions regarding this newest Unified Command, but these were &issues of the past.8 From his point of view, there is now clarity regarding the role of AFRICOM, and he sees significant advantages to it.

¶4. (C) President Kikwete expressed appreciation for ACOTA and said Africa is in great need of capacity building, training, and modern skills in the security sector. He said many of his commanders need to understand that times have changed and new skills and techniques are required. He noted the AU, in particular, needs help with capacity building, from its Conflict Early Warning System to its administrative functions to the Africa Stand-by Force.

STATUS OF FORCES AGREEMENT (SOFA) MUST PROCEED SLOWLY

¶5. (C) President Kikwete apologized for his government taking a long time with the SOFA, and said he would have a meeting to deal with it upon his return to Tanzania. He blamed the delay on &some people (who) are living in the past.8 &We need to move them along slowly,8 he said. General Ward thanked the President for his efforts in this regard, noting the SOFA would &open doors8 for closer collaboration.

CURRENT ISSUES

¶6. (U) President Kikwete then reviewed the current security crises he was dealing with as Chairman of the AU:

¶7. (SBU) SUDAN: On Sudan, Kikwete said the &biggest headache8 is the lack of unity among the rebels. He indicated he had made progress in pushing President Bashir to be more forthcoming. Whereas Bashir once would accept only troops from non-African countries after Egypt and Ethiopia deployed, he now says all troops can deploy when ready, and Bashir will accept troops from any country, except Denmark (due to the anti-Muslim cartoon controversy). Kikwete said Bashir would also now accept helicopters and engineers from all countries, including the U.S. On worker visas, Kikwete thought this issue could be solved by a trilateral commission of the UN, AU, and GOS.

¶8. (SBU) EASTERN CONGO: Kikwete said the situation was difficult, but praised the deployment of former Presidents Obasanjo of Nigeria and Mkapa of Tanzania as envoys of the UN and AU, respectively. He noted the regional group would meet again next month to gauge progress.

¶9. (C) SOMALIA: Kikwete was very pessimistic on Somalia, indicating that only Ethiopia was keeping Somalia together, and the Ethiopians would pull out soon. He said the idea of the extremists gaining control of Somalia is &too ghastly to contemplate.8 He noted the AU has limitations on its ability to respond to the situation and expressed hope that the UN would now move quickly, though he noted it tended to move very slowly) &like a huge truck negotiating a sharp

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corner.8

¶10. (C) PIRACY: Kikwete expressed concern over the ransoms being paid to pirates, noting this was &money in the hand of the Islamists.8 He said more help was required at sea. General Ward responded that there were many facets to the problem, including gaining greater stability on land and greater security aboard the targeted vessels. Kikwete asked with so many countries engaged in trying to stop the pirates, was there an overall joint strategy to coordinate them. General Ward said the different forces at sea are talking to each other and acknowledged UN discussions on the situation, but there is no overarching strategy within the international community to his knowledge. Ambassador noted another issue was identifying venues in which to prosecute captured pirates. He said over the long-term, the AU Court in Arusha might be such a venue, but in the short-term the AU might identify individual countries with the necessary capacity and legal infrastructure as preferred venues for pirate trials. President Kikwete said he would investigate this approach.

¶11. (U) Gen. Ward has cleared this message.
YAMAMOTO